

first female Police Lieutenant in the Department's history. During her time as Lieutenant, she served as the Administrative Lieutenant and the Patrol Operations Lieutenant. The Lieutenant position was reclassified to the rank of Police Commander on January 1, 2009. Commander Shearn is the first female Police Commander in the department's history.

Commander Shearn was named Employee of the Quarter for Fall 2003. She received this award for organizing and coordinating a Board of Corrections jail inspection. The Newark Police Department passed this inspection with significant recognition. In 2009, she received the honor of the City of Newark Employee of the Year award from Mayor Dave Smith at the annual Employee Service Awards. She received this award for her dedicated efforts to advance the Police Department, despite the limited resources allocated to the Department.

Commander Shearn was awarded the Chiefs Challenge Coin of Special Recognition for her outstanding work, loyalty to the organization, and tireless efforts in the development and promotion of the Mission, Vision, and Values of the Newark Police Department. This coin is issued only to members of the Police Department who consistently perform at exemplary levels or rise above with a single act of excellence.

I join in saluting Commander Shearn for her commitment to excellence, thanking her for her exemplary service, and wishing her well on her retirement.

CELEBRATING THE SERVICE OF DON L. RIDING

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 20, 2011

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Don L. Riding, Fresno Field Office Director with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). After 39 years of dedicated service, Don is retiring so he can spend more time with his family.

Don began his career in 1972 with the federal agency we then called Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). He was based in El Paso, Texas as an Immigration Inspector. In 1975, Don was transferred to the INS Baltimore, Maryland office as a Criminal Investigator, where he investigated immigration fraud. Don was promoted in 1980 to Course Developer/Instructor at the Immigration Officer Academy in Glynnco, Georgia. He remained at the Academy for 2 more years before he became the Port Director at Laredo, Texas in 1982. In 1984, our community was lucky when Don was transferred to Fresno as Officer in Charge. He has remained in Fresno ever since and was promoted in September 2003 to Field Officer Director for the now U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in Fresno. Don has been doing a tremendous job in Fresno for almost three decades.

Before the INS, Don spent two years in the U.S. Army and then two years on a church mission in Brazil. Don received his B.A. degree from Brigham Young University in 1972. I applaud Don Riding for his many years of tireless work on behalf of the United States government. I know he will enjoy more time

with his wife, Donna, his five children and four grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it should be noted that in addition to his countless gifts to our community, Don has been a true champion for my constituents. In my office the majority of our constituent casework is immigration issues. These are sensitive cases that can sometimes take a great deal of time to resolve. My Fresno staff has worked closely with Don Riding on immigration issues for twenty years and proudly recollects Don always being available to discuss cases and work together on issues of concern. I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the commitment, dedication and success of Don Riding and wish him well as he embarks on new endeavors.

HONORING VACLAV HAVEL

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 20, 2011

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize and pay tribute to former Czech president and play-wright Vaclav Havel. He began as one of Czechoslovakia's best-known dissidents as he pushed for democratic change during the dark days of the Soviet Union. He went on to become the first president of the Czech Republic.

I submit for the RECORD an article from Monday's Washington Post where post columnist Michael Gerson, recalled Havel's message to a joint session of Congress in which he urged Americans to put "morality ahead of politics" and to foster "responsibility—responsibility to something higher than my family, my country, my company, my success." This same message could not come at a more timely moment. I commend it to my colleagues.

[From the Washington Post, Dec. 19, 2011]

HAVEL'S REVOLUTION OF TRUTH

(By Michael Gerson)

As the heroes of the Cold War walk off into the mist—Ronald Reagan, then John Paul II, now Vaclav Havel—each departure makes that world more distant and foreign. But it is too early for forgetfulness, which would also be ingratitude.

Once in a nightmare, European dissidents lived in prison, in whole nations that were prisons. They were confined to mental hospitals by governments sustained through the promotion of mass delusion. They were forced to make confessions of imagined crimes by regimes that were criminal enterprises.

And then the government of Czechoslovakia went a step too far. In 1976, it arrested a band called The Plastic People of the Universe for offenses against cultural conformity. This was a perfect symbol of communism: a system that could not tolerate the unauthorized singing of songs. The regime's stupidity undermined its capacity to intimidate. Havel—a countercultural intellectual and rock fan—co-founded the Charter 77 human rights movement. Never has bad popular music been put to better use.

In history's great refutation of historical pessimism, Europe's nightmare turned out to be a "fairy tale"—a phrase Havel used to describe his experience. On Oct. 27, 1989, Havel was sent to prison for the fourth time. That December, 300,000 Czechs turned out in

Wenceslas Square to chant, "Havel to the Castle!" By New Year's Day, Havel could declare, "People, your government has returned to you!" In February, he addressed a joint session of Congress as the leader of a free Czechoslovakia. It was four months from prisoner to visiting president.

Havel helped overthrow communism by discrediting its central tenet. Scientific socialism taught that history is the outworking of massive economic and social forces that the individual could not hope to budge. Ideals, Marx sniffed, were "phantoms formed in the human brain." As Winston Churchill might have said of Havel: Some phantom. Some brain. Havel relentlessly exposed communist ideology as a confidence game, a Ponzi scheme, dependent on broad deference to obvious lies. One ideal—a commitment to truth—proved to be a lever long enough to move the world.

Reading back over Havel's landmark 1978 essay, "The Power of the Powerless," is like wading through molasses scattered with diamonds. The intellectual jargon is thick—and then comes a crystalline phrase, a perfectly polished insight. Communist regimes require people to "live within a lie," demanding dehumanizing rituals of loyalty. He describes his country as plastered with slogans but lacking in genuine belief. "Each person," he says, "somehow succumbs to a profane trivialization of his inherent humanity." They drift together "down the river of pseudolife."

Yet in a society ruled by lies, truth gains a "singular, explosive, incalculable political power." The desire to live authentically is the equivalent of a fifth column—a revolution hidden in a whole society. Truth advances in a political speech, in a hunger strike, in a play, in a song. "It is a bacteriological weapon, so to speak," says Havel, "utilized when conditions are ripe by a single civilian to disarm an entire division." Havel was a historical prophet of the first order—and the fulfillment of his own prophecy.

"Living within the truth," according to Havel, is an inherently moral enterprise. It requires sacrifice, which presupposes a "sense of responsibility" for others—a belief in love, friendship and compassion. In the company of John Paul II and Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Havel believed that political renewal starts in moral and personal renewal. In one letter from prison he wrote, "But who should begin? Who should break this vicious circle? The only possible place to begin is with myself Whether all is really lost or not depends entirely on whether or not I am lost."

Uncomfortably, Havel also applied this moral vision to the prosperous nations of the West. He criticized "a selfish cult of material success" and "the absence of faith in a higher order of things." Consumerism and relativism, he warned, could also strip people of humanity and responsibility. Even the wealthy and powerful can live within the lie. In his speech to Congress, Havel urged Americans to put "morality ahead of politics" and to foster "responsibility—responsibility to something higher than my family, my country, my company, my success."

American intellectual Noam Chomsky called Havel's speech an "embarrassingly silly and morally repugnant Sunday School sermon"—itself a statement both silly and repugnant.

The Czech Republic had this rare advantage: Its leading intellectual believed in the ideals of Western civilization. And by his faith in civilization, he helped to save it.